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OILS, WATER COLORS, PASTELS

& DRAWINGS

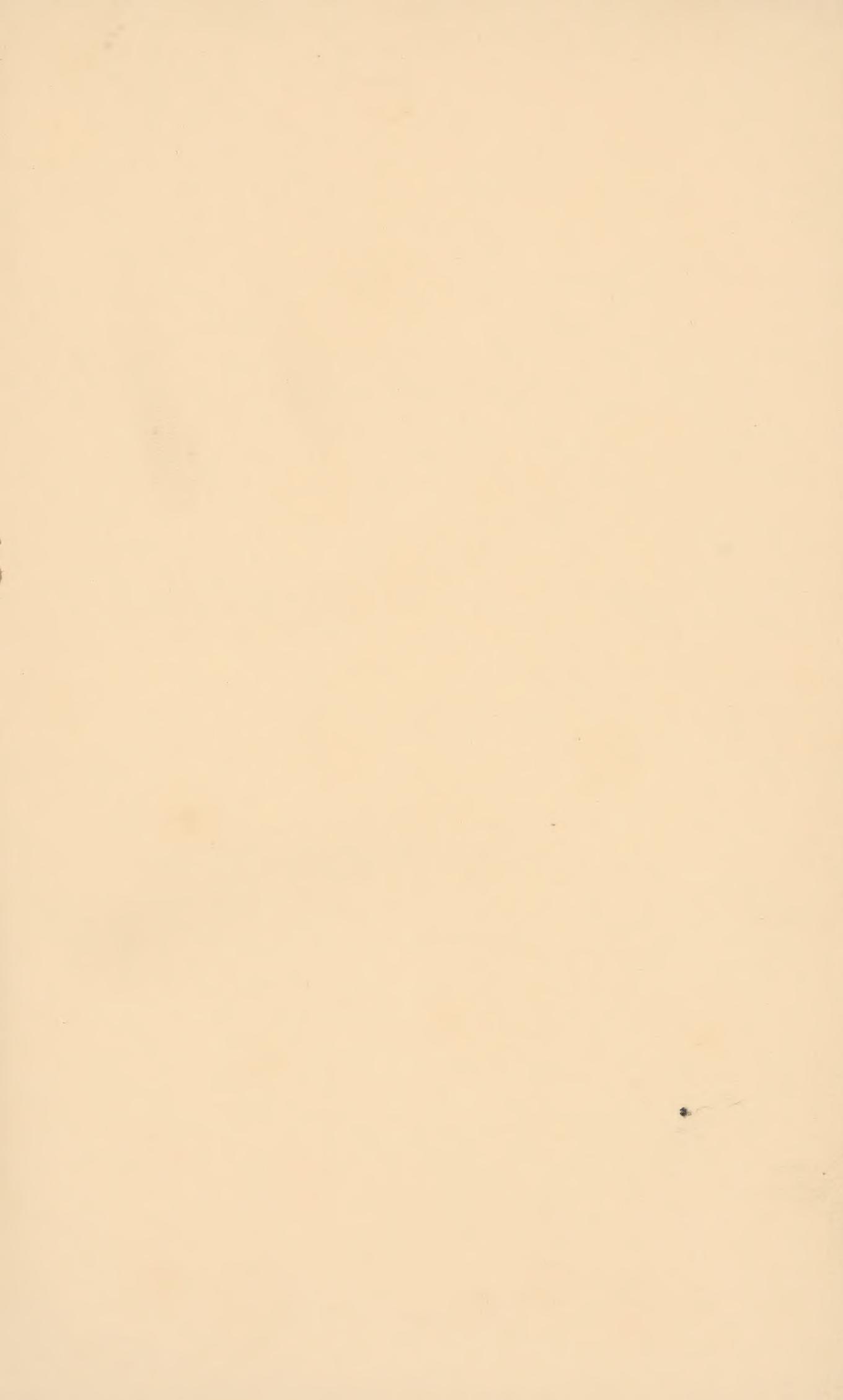


BY

AMES McNEILL WHISTLER

SMITHSONIAN
INSTITUTION

502.





ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK AND BROWN: ROSA CORDER

OILS, WATER COLORS, PASTELS

ε D R A W I N G S



BY

JAMES MCNEILL WHISTLER

LENT BY MR. RICHARD CANFIELD

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FREER GALLERY OF ART

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INTRODUCTION

The coming of the Whistlers to Buffalo marks an epoch in the history of the Albright Art Gallery. The time has gone by when it seems necessary to mention more than the name of Whistler, who was so distinguished a figure in the world of art.

The present collection of the Art of James McNeill Whistler is owned by Mr. Richard Canfield, and has been most generously lent by him for exhibition at the Albright Art Gallery. It is one of the very highest order, there not being an example in the entire group that is not of the best quality for its medium. As a whole, the collection is a thorough and complete exposition of the Artist's personal technique. The art of Mr. Whistler is more closely held than that of any other painter of modern times—a transfer of ownership of an important example almost never occurs, especially since Mr. Whistler's death.

It is interesting to know from whom the wonderful examples in the present exhibition were secured. Le Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezen-

sac was purchased from the Count himself; *Rosa Corder* came from *W. Graham Robertson, Esq.*; *La Napolitaine* from the *Whistler* estate; *The Ocean* from *Mrs. Peter Taylor*; *The Venetian Series* of pastels from *J. Staats Forbes's* collection; the two other pastels, all of the water colors, and drawings were selected by *Mr. Canfield* from *Mr. Whistler's* own examples.

By permission of the Museum authorities, the *Metropolitan Catalogue* has been drawn upon for some of the descriptions of the pictures given in this volume.

The Buffalo Fine Arts Academy hereby acknowledges most gratefully its deep obligation to *Mr. Richard Canfield*, through whose great generosity the *Albright Art Gallery* is able to show Buffalonians such a superb collection of the works of *James McNeill Whistler*.

CORNELIA B. SAGE,
Director.



ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK AND GOLD: LE COMTE ROBERT

MR. WHISTLER was a distinguished figure in the World's Art. There has been no greater artistic personality for many a day. Subtle in feeling and in artistic vision, exquisite in his power of discriminating selection and the delicacy and charm of his interpretation, as well as in his technique; with rare sense of color and its harmonious combinations, no man has been more discussed, more admired, or more appreciated than Mr. Whistler. He was born at Lowell, Mass., in 1834. For a time, Mr. Whistler was a student at West Point. In 1857, he studied under Gleyre, in Paris. He lived and painted in England, France, and Holland. His early productions show the influence of Greece, the Orient, and other classical art. By degrees his work became distinctly his own. As an etcher and lithographer, he has had no superior. He was the recipient of many medals and decorations. He was a member of the Royal Society of British Artists; the Société Nationale des Beaux Arts, Paris; President of the International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers, London; Honorary Member of the Royal Academy of Saint Luke, Rome; Honorary Member of the Royal Academy of Bavaria, Munich; and of the Royal Academy of Dresden; Officer of the Legion of Honor; Knight of the Order of Saint Michael of Bavaria; Commander of the Order of the Crown of Italy, etc. He was accorded the Grand Prix twice at the Paris Exposition, 1900 — one for etching, and one for oil painting; he also received the D. C. L. from the Glasgow University. He is represented in the Gallery of the Luxembourg, Paris; the Corporation Gallery, Glasgow; the Edinburgh Museum; the Boston Museum of Art; the Metropolitan Museum, New York; the Chicago Art Institute; the Carnegie Museum, Pittsburgh; Worcester Art Museum, Worcester; and in many private collections in America and Europe, including that of Charles L. Freer, Esq., of Detroit (where he is not only represented by innumerable works in oil, water-color, pastel, and etchings, but by the celebrated Peacock Room); and of Richard Canfield, Esq., of Providence, R. I. Mr. Whistler died in London, in 1903.



SYMPHONY IN GRAY AND GREEN: THE OCEAN

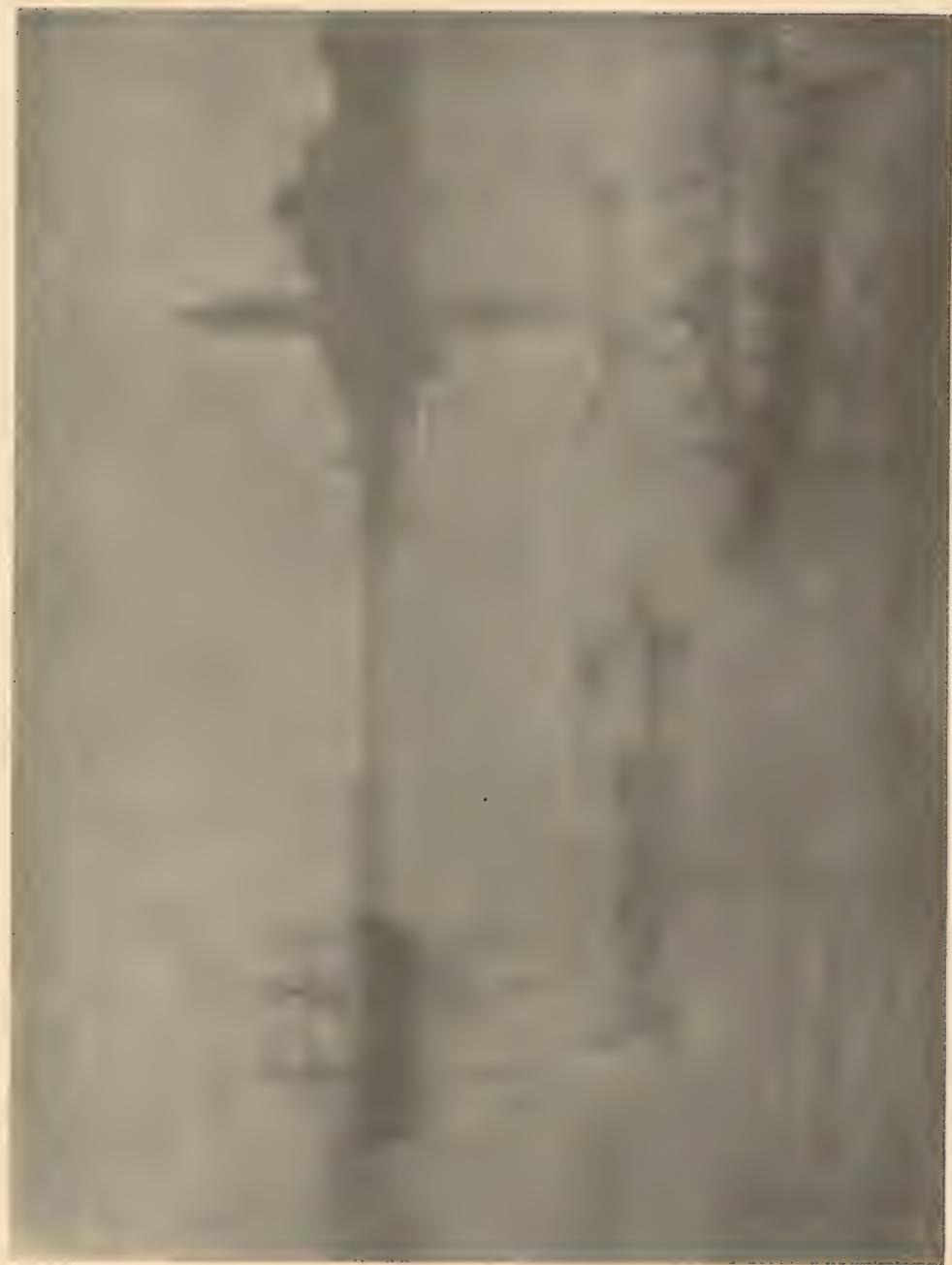
CATALOGUE OF WORKS
BY
JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER
—
OILS

I ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK
AND BROWN: ROSA CORDER

Full length, life size, standing figure with her back towards the spectator, her body turned to the right and her face seen in profile. Her light brown hair is tightly coiled. She wears a black dress and a black coat edged with fur, with white showing at the neck and down the front. The right hand, hanging at her side, holds a brown felt hat with flowing brown feather. The background is dark, almost black: the floor is gray-brown.

Jacque Blanche, the painter, has said that Whistler once saw Miss Rosa Corder in her brown dress pass a door painted black and was struck with the effect of the color. The picture was begun at 2 Lindsey Row, before 1876, as a commission from *Charles Augustus Howell, Whistler's man of affairs. It was sold at Christie's with Howell's other effects in April, 1881, for 130 pounds. In 1902, Whistler saw

*Private secretary to Ruskin and Dante G. Rossetti.



NOCTURNE: BLUE AND SILVER

to the varnishing of this picture when it was purchased by the present owner from Graham Robertson.

The picture was exhibited at the Grosvenor Gallery in 1879; at the Salon des Artistes Français in 1890; at Glasgow, Munich, Liverpool, Exposition Universal, St. Louis, 1904; International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers in 1898 (No. 178), and in the Memorial Exhibition at Boston (No. 25), and Paris (No. 21).

2 ARRANGEMENT IN BLACK AND GOLD: LE COMTE ROBERT

Full length, life size, standing figure turned to the right with his face almost full front. He wears a black suit; a dark gray overcoat, lined with silvery-gray, is thrown over his left arm; in his left hand he holds a slender brown cane. The background is dark, almost black; the floor is a golden brown.

Butterfly monogram, in brown silhouette against darker background, is placed to the left half-way up.

This portrait of Count Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac was painted in 1890 and 1891; there was a second one, which was never finished. Edmond de Goncourt, in his journal for July 7, 1891, wrote: "Montesquiou tells me that Whistler is now doing two portraits of him: one is in evening dress with a fur coat under his



LA NAPOLITAINE: ROSE ET OR

arm, the other in a gray cloak, with high collar at his neck just suggested, a necktie of a mauve not to be put into words, though his eyes express the ideal color of it."

Whistler undertook to make a lithograph of the Comte Robert, but failed, saying: "It was impossible to produce the same masterpiece twice over — as difficult as for a hen to lay the same egg twice."

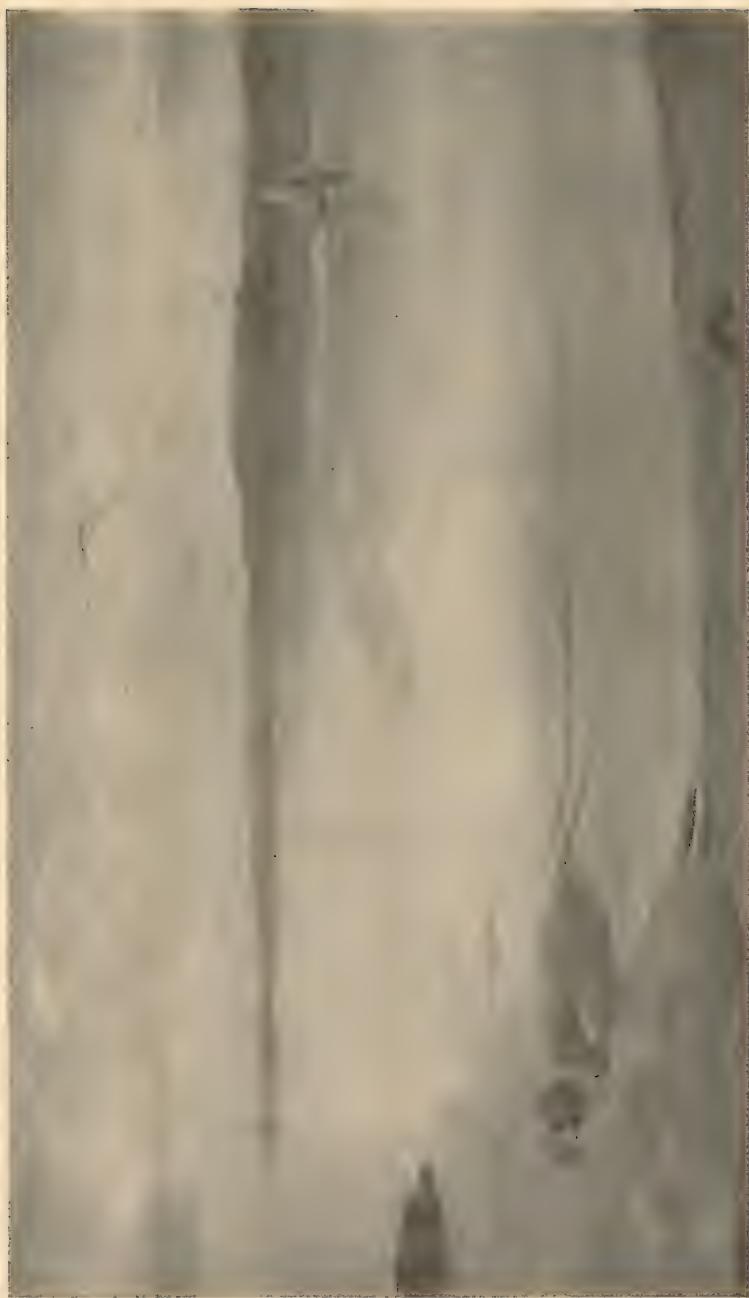
The present owner purchased this portrait from the Comte de Montesquiou early in 1903. It was shown in the Boston Memorial Exhibition (No. 39). An illustration appears in Duret, p. 174.

3 SYMPHONY IN GRAY AND GREEN: THE OCEAN

A broad expanse of water with several vessels at anchor. To the left the end of a pier against which waves are breaking; to the right branches and leaves are silhouetted against the water. The sky is green-gray and the lightest at the horizon.

Butterfly monogram is in a dark cartouche to the right near the bottom. The frame was designed and decorated by Whistler; the butterfly monogram is repeated on the right-hand side of the frame, a little higher than the signature on the canvas.

This is the earliest picture in the exhibition wherein the butterfly monogram appears.



GRAY AND GOLD: THE GOLDEN BAY—IRELAND

Whistler began to feel that a large signature, such as he used in his early pictures, was a discordant note. With the symphonies, nocturnes, and large portraits the butterfly began to be used. It was made from the interlacing of the letters J. M. W. into a monogram, which gradually evolved into the butterfly in outline, then shaded, and finally a stencil-like silhouette. It was introduced as a note of color, as important in the picture as anything else. At times it was put in almost at the first painting to judge the effect; was scraped out with the proper effect. The butterfly was used as a signature on prints and in his correspondence, on invitations, and on catalogues; in "THE GENTLE ART OF MAKING ENEMIES" it was elaborated in many ways and a sting was added.

This is one of the pictures painted at Valparaiso; its first title was "The Pacific."

The picture was lent to the Goupil Gallery Exhibition in 1892 (No. 15), by Mrs. Peter Taylor; it was in the Salon the same year, and was in the Memorial Exhibitions at Boston (No. 74), and Paris (No. 62).

4 LA NAPOLITAINE: ROSE ET OR
A bust portrait, full face, of a dark-haired, dark-eyed woman. She wears a rose-colored dress with dark trimming, a V-shaped opening

at the throat, which shows a single row of coral beads. Dark-olive background.

Butterfly monogram, scarcely more than a dark shadow, near the center of the right-hand edge. The model for this was probably Mme. Carmen Rossi, who, as a child, had posed for Whistler. She lived in Naples for some years and then returned to Paris, and in 1898 opened an art school, at which Whistler gave criticisms.

5 NOCTURNE: BLUE AND SILVER

A blue clear night with an expanse of water in the foreground where some gondolas are seen. In the middle distance a ship at anchor and in the far distance the land line is delineated by glimmering lights which are reflected in the water. Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.

Exhibited at American Art Exhibition, in the Royal Academy of Arts, Berlin, and Royal Art Academy, Munich.

6 GRAY AND GOLD: THE GOLDEN BAY—IRELAND

A bright sunny day with blue sky and fleecy clouds reflected in the calm water of a little bay. Some rocks in the foreground and a small boat sailing to the distant land.

Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.



THE GOSSIPs—AJACCIO

WATER-COLORS

These were chosen by Mr. Canfield from the artist's private collection and seldom have been exhibited.

7 THE GOSSIP—AJACCIO

A dark doorway in an old Venetian house where two women have met to indulge in their matutinal gossip.

8 BLUE AND SILVER: AFTERNOON, THE CHANNEL

A summer afternoon on the channel. A choppy sea of azure blue and above windy clouds with pink tones.

Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.

9 GRAY AND SILVER: THE GOLF LINKS, DUBLIN

A scene on the golf links, Dublin, on a windy day. Much movement in the clouds. Some figures are seen walking in the distance.

Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.

10 VIOLET AND SILVER: THE AFTERNOON DREAM

A mother and babe asleep. Exquisite composition. Great charm of color. Much lavender and a touch of blue in drapery.

Butterfly monogram in upper right corner.



GREEN AND BLUE: THE DANCER

11 OPAL AND GOLD: EVENING,
POURVILLE

A coast scene at sunset. Water very blue and a ship in middle distance. Red tones in sky. Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.

12 RETURN OF THE FISHING
BOATS

A stretch of water with a number of fishing boats in the distance. Wonderful quality of surface on the water. In the foreground some men are standing on the shore waiting for the boats. Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.

13 GREEN AND BLUE: THE
DANCER

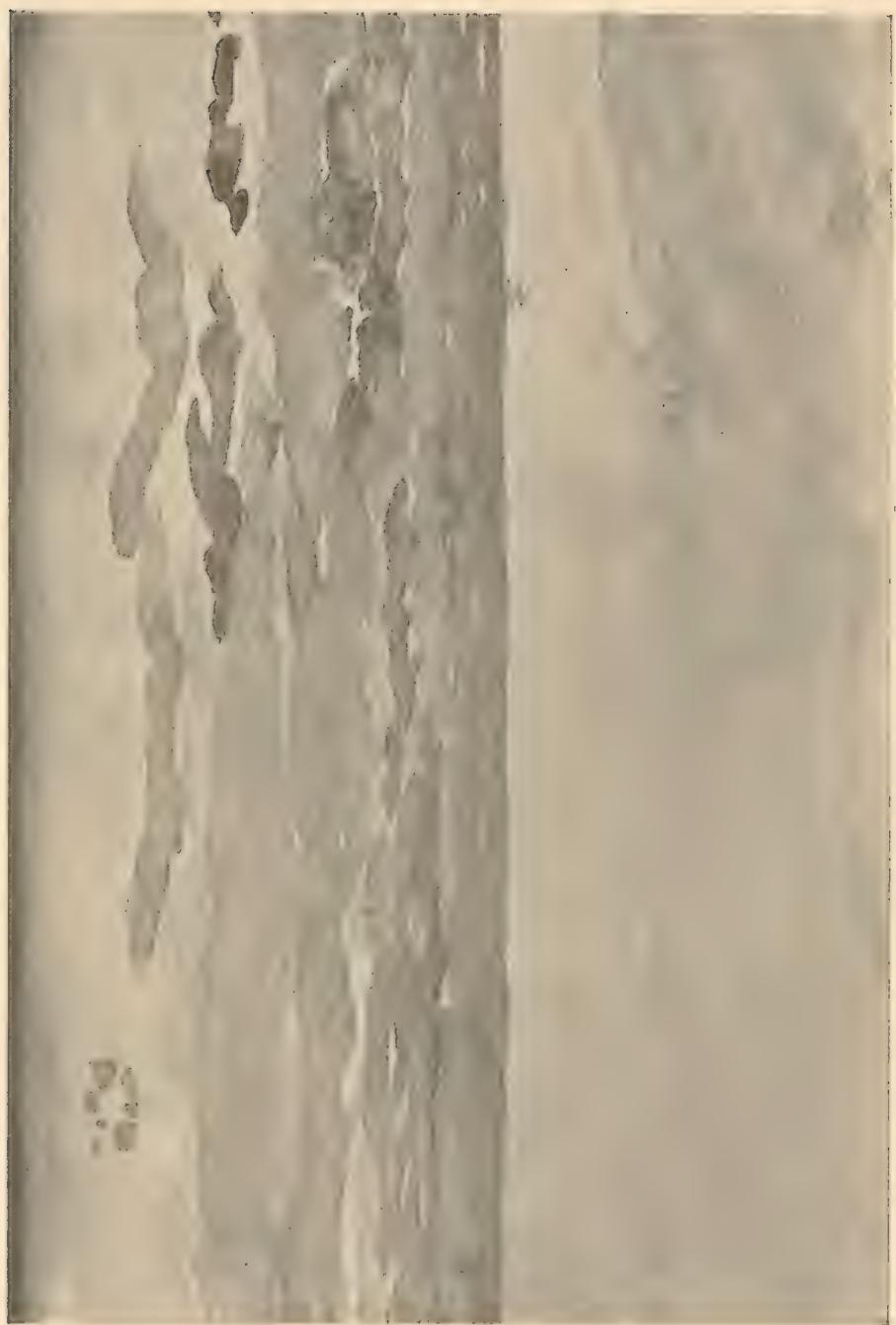
A charming figure of a young girl dancing. She wears a filmy green drapery and carries a fan. A red cap adorns her head. In the background is a green-blue which harmonizes with the green draperies.

Butterfly monogram in upper right corner.

14 THE PINK CAP

A young woman stands leaning against a wall. She wears a transparent black drapery and on her head is a pink cap.

Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.



BLUE AND SILVER: AFTERNOON, THE CHANNEL

15 BLUE AND SILVER: MORNING, AJACCIO

A beautiful view of a bit of the distant city on a sunny morning. Blue sky with clouds and blue water.

16 GRAY AND GOLD: BELLE ISLE

A bit of coastline,— a charming view of the calm sea in which is reflected white clouds. A tiny ship appears at the left.

Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.



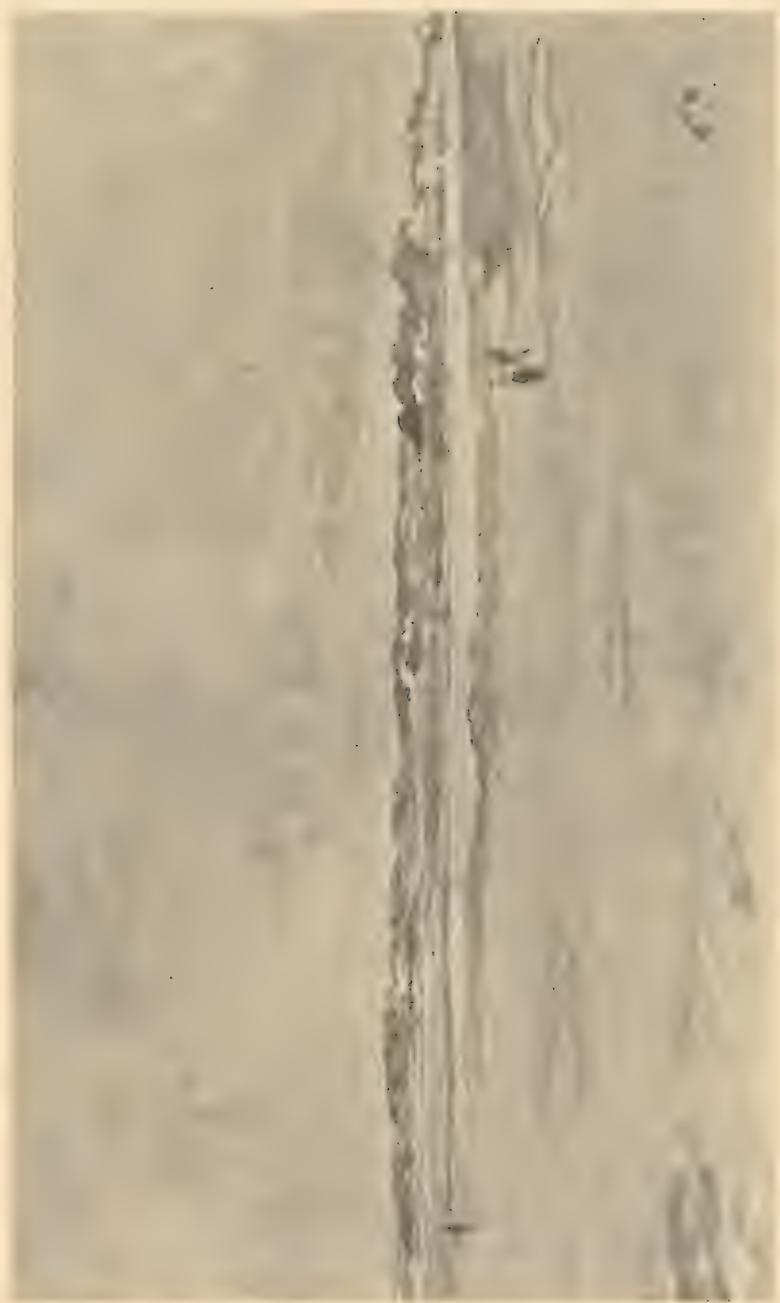
THE PINK CAP



OPAL AND GOLD: EVENING, POURVILLE



VIOLET AND SILVER: THE AFTERNOON DREAM



GRAY AND SILVER: THE GOLF LINKS, DUBLIN



GRAY AND GOLD: BELLE ISLE



THE RETURN OF THE FISHING BOATS



BLUE AND SILVER: MORNING, AJACCIO

PASTELS—VENETIAN SERIES

Chosen by Mr. Canfield from Mr. Whistler's private collection.

17 NOCTURNE, VENICE

In the foreground a line of boats; lights gleam on the distant shore and are reflected in the water.

Butterfly monogram, shaded, placed on the right near the bottom.

This picture was in the Paris Memorial Exhibition (No. 154).

18 LONG VENICE

View of Venice seen from the lagoon; vessels at anchor; deep blue water reflecting several campaniles. A similar composition appears in the etching, Little Venice (W. 149), which was one of the Venice set published by the Fine Art Society, London, 1880.

Butterfly monogram, in outline, on lower edge to the right of the center.

This picture was in the Paris Memorial Exhibition (No. 152).

19 A CANAL, VENICE

A narrow, winding canal with four moored gondolas; in the distance, a steep, single-arch bridge. Houses to the right and left with green

shutters reflected in the water. The same canal from a slightly different point of view may be seen in the etching. Quiet Canal (W. 184). Butterfly monogram, shaded with brown, placed at the left near the bottom.

This picture was in the Paris Memorial Exhibition (No. 156).

20 THE FERRY, VENICE

A narrow canal with steps at the end; three moored gondolas. To the right are houses with green and red shutters; to the left a high wall with overhanging foliage. In the middle distance is a single-arched bridge, and beyond, to the left, a row of houses.

Butterfly monogram, shaded with brown, in lower left corner.

This picture was in the Paris Memorial Exhibition (No. 157).

21 A STREET, VENICE

A woman in a black shawl is seen in a narrow street with high houses on each side. Beyond are steps and several figures.

This picture was in the Paris Memorial Exhibition (No. 161).

22 LE CIMITIÈRE, VENICE

A wide canal with three draped gondolas; to the right a white church and its cemetery with



NOCTURNE: VENICE

green trees. In the distance a line of buildings silhouetted between sea and sky.

Butterfly monogram, in outline, in lower left corner.

This picture was in the Paris Memorial Exhibition (No. 155).

An illustration appears in Cary, p. 198.

23 THE DOORWAY, VENICE

A courtyard with two gaily-dressed women at a well. Through the doorway is seen a passage, a canal, and the houses on the other bank. Above the doorway are three windows with green shutters and railings; in two of the windows women are leaning over the railing.

Butterfly monogram, shaded with brown, placed to the right below the center.

Whistler's only visit to Venice was from September, 1879, to November, 1880, and during that time he executed many etchings and pastels. His method was to draw with black chalk on brown paper and then faintly suggest with pastels the colors of the old walls, the green shutters, the women's bright dresses. The color was put in as with mosaics or stained glass — usually a flat tint of pastel between the black lines. In this way he had for years made studies for his pictures.

The above seven Venetian pastels were lent by Mr. Canfield to the Paris Memorial Exhibition. This one was No. 166.



LONG VENICE

24 THE CAPTIVE (Pastel)

A young woman is seated on a divan and holds the child which is endeavoring to pull away. This is on a gray background, done principally in black and white, but with a touch of red on the back of the divan and the cap.

Butterfly monogram in upper right corner.

25 IRIS—BLUE AND SILVER (Pastel)

A mother stands in a most graceful pose holding a babe in her arms. The changing, transparent blue of the mother's gown is accentuated by the dark gray background. Both in charm of color and exquisite composition, this is one of the gems of the collection.

Butterfly monogram in lower right corner.



A CANAL: VENICE



THE FERRY: VENICE



A STREET: VENICE



LE CIMITIÈRE : VENICE



THE DOORWAY: VENICE

IRIS: BLUE AND SILVER



THE CAPTIVE



DRAWINGS—PEN AND INK

The following nine drawings are especially notable, and were selected by Mr. Canfield from the artist's collection.

26 AT SEA

A long deck of ship passengers leaning over rail looking intently at the sea. Wonderful effect expressed in a few lines.

Butterfly monogram upper right corner.

27 STREET, AJACCIO

A narrow street thronged with wayfarers; remarkable perspective.

Butterfly monogram upper left corner.

28 THE DANCER, No. 1

The graceful figure of a dancing girl with thin draperies. She holds a fan in her left hand.

Butterfly monogram lower left corner.

29 STREET, ALGIERS

A very narrow curved street. In the foreground stands a woman holding a child and several other figures are marvelously indicated with a few lines.

Butterfly monogram almost in center.

30 THE DANCER, No. 2

Evidently the same figure as No. 28, but in a different pose.

Butterfly monogram upper right corner.

31 CAFÉ, ALGIERS

Exterior corner of a well-frequented café. Over the door is an awning and to the left of picture a palm tree.

Butterfly monogram in center.

32 SHOP, ALGIERS

Within the door is a counter, behind which is a figure waiting for custom; in the doorway sits a man with his legs crossed — the whole is a marvelous piece of pen-work.

Butterfly monogram left middle.

PENCIL

33 THE FORGE

Within an arched doorway two figures are seen in the light of the fire against a dark background. Butterfly monogram in left middle.

34 STREET, CORSICA

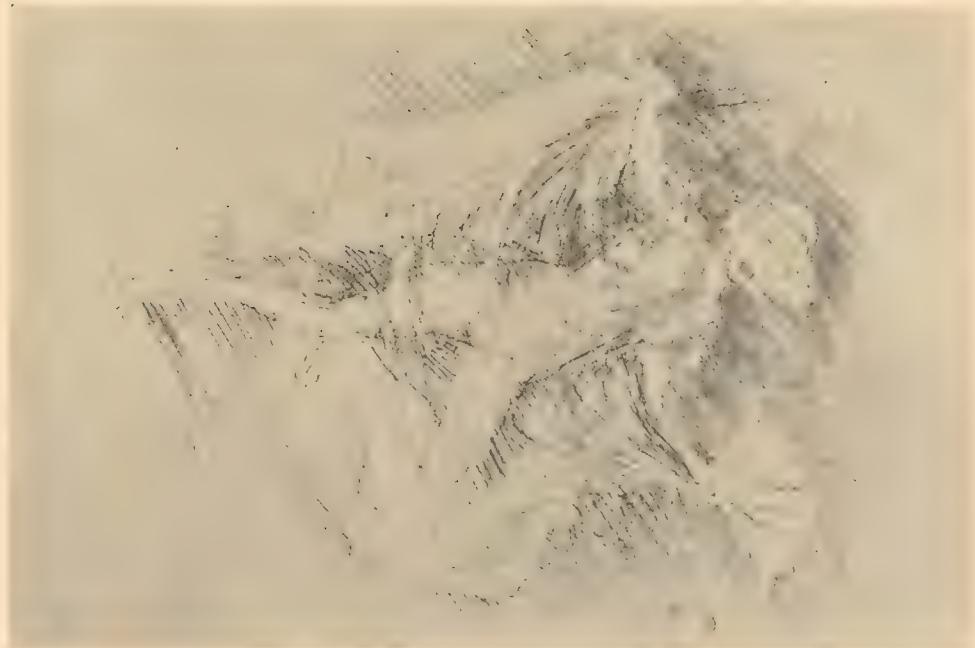
A busy scene, many figures coming and going along a rather broad street. Buildings of some height and consequence on either side of the street; view in distance.

Butterfly monogram in left corner.

THE DANCER, No. 1



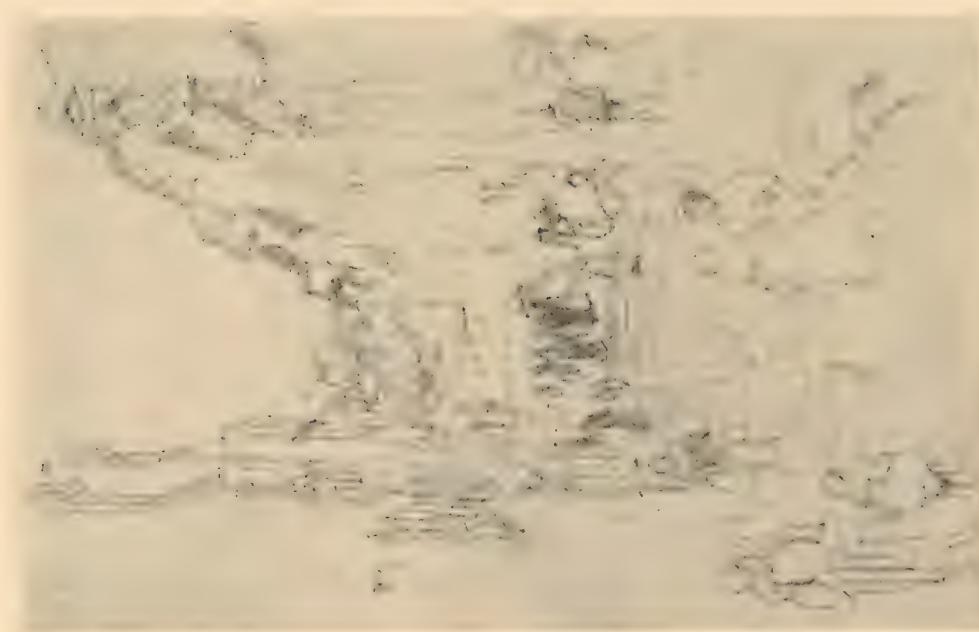
THE DANCER, No. 2



THE FORGE



STREET: CORSICA

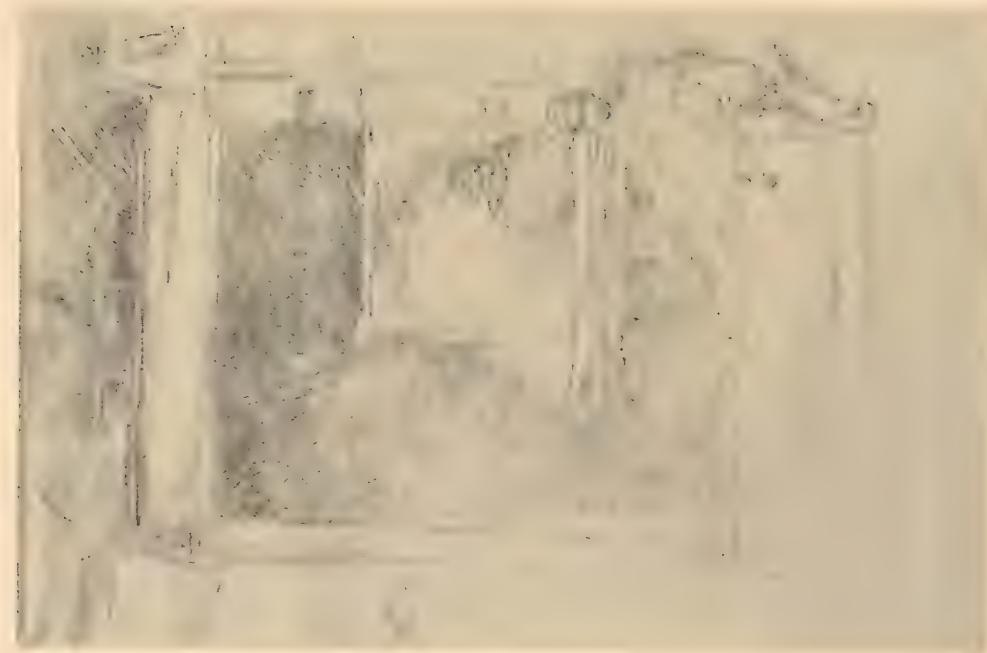




STREET: AJACCIO



STREET: ALGIERS



SHOP: ALGIERS



AT SEA



CAFÉ: ALGIERS

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